

Message Text

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TAGS: ECE, EMIN

SUBJ: ECE - FORTY-FOURTH SESSION, ECE STEEL COMMITTEE,
27-29 OCTOBER 1976

REF: A) GENEVA 8536; B) GENEVA 8478

1. TWENTY-THREE OF LARGEST STEEL PRODUCING COUNTRIES
PLUS REPS FROM UNICO, UNDP, ILO, EEC, AND CMEA
ATTENDED ECE STEEL COMMITTEE MEETING 27 - 29 OCT.
MR. Z. SOBCZYK (POLAND) WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT AND MR.
J. GHISLAIN (BELGIUM) VICE-PRESIDENT.

2. CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM RE MATTERS ARISING
FROM THIRTY-FIRST SESSION, INCLUDING SOVIET PROPOSAL
FOR ALL-EUROPEAN CONGRESSES ON ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT
AND ENERGY, PLUS US STATEMENT REPORTED REFTELS.

3. UNDER AGENDA ITEM ON SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM TRENDS
IN THE STEEL MARKET, COUNTRY REPS MADE STATEMENTS ON
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STEEL MARKET CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN 1976 AND OUTLOOK

FOR 1977. US STATEMENT (ATTACHED AS ENCLOSURE TO DELEGATION INSTRUCTIONS) WAS ONE OF FEW WHICH TOOK OPTIMISTIC VIEW TOWARD IMPROVEMENT OF STEEL MARKET CONDITIONS IN 1977. MOST COUNTRY STATEMENTS ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM FRANCE, BELGIUM AND UK WERE PLAINLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR UPTURN. USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE, WHICH ARE LARGELY INSULATED FROM WESTERN MARKET CYCLES, REPORTED CONTINUED GOOD PRODUCTION LEVELS BUT WITH INCREASED SIGNS OF STRAIN DUE TO DEPRESSED WESTERN EUROPEAN CONDITIONS. JAPAN REPORTED SLOWER GROWTH THAN HOPED FOR BUT ESSENTIALLY GOOD YEAR IN 1975, LED BY IMPROVED EXPORTS, PARTICULARLY INDIRECT EXPORTS OF STEEL IN FORM OF MACHINERY AND OTHER CAPITAL EQUIPMENT. DISCUSSION WAS PUNCTUATED BY UNUSUALLY BITTER ATTACK BY FRENCH ON JAPANESE "LOW-PRICED" IMPORTS ENTERING EUROPEAN AND THIRD COUNTRY MARKETS. MOST COUNTRIES EXPERIENCED GOOD YEAR FOR AUTOS IN 1975 BUT BAD YEAR FOR CONSTRUCTION AND SHIPBUILDING. PROVISIONAL DATA ON OUTPUT FOR 1976-1977 OF IRON ORE AND CONCENTRATES, PIG IRON, CRODE STEEL, HOT-ROLLED FINISHED PRODUCTS AND SPECIFIC CONSUMPTION OF COKE IN BLAST FURNACES FOR MOST COUNTRIES CIRCULATED DURING MEETING.

4. COMMITTEE DISCUSSED STATUS OF THREE MAJOR STUDIES NOW IN PREPARATION: (1) STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY (REPORTED SEPTEL), (2) SCRAP PROBLEMS IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY, AND (3) INCREASING USE OF CONTINUOUS PROCESSES IN IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY. IT IS HOPED THAT GREATER PORTIONS OF STUDIES (1) AND (2) WILL BE COMPLETE BY 1977 AND STUDY (3) BY 1978. USDEL MADE SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR REFOCUS AND CHANGES TO STUDIES AS PER INSTRUCTIONS. THESE WERE ACCEPTED AND REFLECTED INC OMMITTEE REPORT (STEEL/CRP.81/ AND ADD 1).

5. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEM ON "SYMPOSIUM ON INTERRELATION BETWEEN IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY AND STEEL CONSUMING SECTORS" RESULTED IN PLEA TO GOVERNMENTS TO PROVIDE ASAP TITLES FOR POSSIBLE PAPERS FOR PRESENTATION. TO FACILITATE RECRUITMENT OF FIRMS OR OTHERS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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PREPARE AND PRESENT PAPERS, A SMALL WORKING GROUP MET TO DRAFT AN OUTLINE DEFINING MORE CLEARLY THE SCOPE OF THE SYMPOSIUM. OUTLINE ATTACHED AS ANNEX 1 TO COMMITTEE REPORT.

6. QUESTION OF ADDITION OF TECHNO-ECONOMIC ANNEX TO "THE STEEL MARKET IN 1976" AS PROPOSED BY USSR WAS DISCUSSED. US, JAPAN, AND MOST EC COUNTRIES ARGUED THAT INFORMATION

NEEDED TO COMPLETE TECHNO-ECONOMIC CHAPTER AS PRESENTLY CONCEIVED WAS SIMPLY NOT READILY AVAILABLE BUT DID NOT OPPOSE CONCEPT OF SUCH A CHAPTER IN PRINCIPLE. COMMITTEE AGREED THAT CHAPTER SHOULD BE PREPARED BY DELEGATION OF USSR BASED ON INFO PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENTS AND SHOULD BE EXAMINED BY INFORMAL MEETING OF EXPERTS IN FEB/MARCH 1977. IT WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT PREPARATION OF CHAPTER SHOULD IN NO WAY DELAY PUBLICATION OF REGULAR STEEL MARKET ANNUAL REPORT.

7. FUTURE SEMINARS WERE ANNOUNCED AS FOLLOWS:

CZECHOSLOVAKIA - 1978 (ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF COMPUTER TECHNIQUES IN IRON AND STEELMAKING PROCESS); LUXEMBOURG - 1979 (STEEL USE IN PUBLIC WORKS, INFRA-STRUCTURE AND CONSTRUCTION); POLAND - 1980 (SUBJECT TO BE DETERMINED).

8. FUTURE STUDY TOURS ANNOUNCED INCLUDED: SPAIN - 1977, GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC - 1978, BENELUX - 1979; SWEDEN - 1980.

9. CONCLUDING, THE SECRETARIAT ANNOUNCED TENTATIVE DATES

OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AS FOLLOWS: FEB. 28 - MAR 1, PREPARATORY MEETING FOR SEMINAR ON ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF COMPUTER TECHNIQUES; MARCH 2 - 3, PREPARATORY MEETING FOR SYMPOSIUM ON INTERRELATION BETWEEN IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY AND STEEL CONSUMING SECTORS: MARCH 4, AD HOC MEETING OF EXPERTS ON STEEL MARKET REVIEW; MARCH 28, AD HOC MEETING OF RAPPORTUER ON STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY; MARCH 29 - 30, AD HOC MEETING OF EXPERTS ON SCRAP PROBLEM.

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LEMS IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY; MARCH 31 - APRIL 1, AD HOC MEETING OF EXPERTS ON INCREASING USE OF CONTINUOUS PROCESSES IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY; JUNE 16 - 17, WORKING PARTY ON THE STEEL MARKET; OCTOBER 24 - 25, AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY; OCTOBER 26 - 28, FORTY-FIFTH PLENARY SESSION OF STEEL COMMITTEE; DEC. 12 - 16, SYMPOSIUM ON INTERRELATIONS BETWEEN THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY AND THE STEEL CONSUMING SECTOR.

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